



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Alturas Field Office
708 W. 12th Street
Alturas, CA 96101
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August 14, 2007

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Honorable Vernon Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW Room 1149
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: STB Docket No. AB-12 (Sub-No. 184x) Abandonment Exemption – Wendel-
Alturas Line in Modoc and Lassen Counties, CA (Related to FD 32706);
Request for Extension of NITU Negotiating Period

Dear Secretary Williams:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Alturas Field Office, with the concurrence of the BLM Eagle Lake Field Office, Lassen and Modoc Counties, and the Union Pacific Railroad (UP) requests a six month extension of the negotiation period for rail banking the Wendel-Alturas segment of the Modoc Line under the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) rules for Interim Trail Use and Rail Banking (49 CFR 1152.29).

The Notice of Interim Trail Use (NITU) negotiating period is currently scheduled to expire on September 3, 2007. This request is for an extension to March 3, 2008.

Our request for a six month extension is based on the following:

- Since our last request for extension dated May 17, 2007, we have identified a purchaser for the Modoc Line (Lassen Land and Trails Trust).
- We have tentatively agreed on a purchase price with Union Pacific and a source of funding has been identified (California State Wildlife Conservation Board).
- A Letter of Understanding has been drafted which will serve as the basis for a Purchase Agreement.
- All agencies involved are aware of the urgency associated with completing NITU negotiations.
- The loss of the Modoc Line would be an economic blow to the rural economy of northeast California.

- UP is likely to realize greater economic benefit if the Modoc Line corridor is left intact.
- Modoc Line rail banking has the support of County Supervisors as well as State and Congressional representatives.

We appreciate your consideration of this request for an NITU negotiating period extension. We also request that you reaffirm the conditions that all bridges and culverts be left in place. We believe this six month extension will allow us to make significant progress in NITU negotiations.

An additional 10 copies of this letter are attached for your files.

If you need additional information please contact me at 530-233-7904 or at tburke@ca.blm.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy J. Burke", written over a horizontal line.

Timothy J. Burke
Field Manager

Attachments

cc:

M. Sattler, Union Pacific
D. Barron, Eagle Lake Field Office
J. Hanson, Lassen County Board of Supervisors
D. Bradshaw, Modoc County Board of Supervisors
J. Branham, Sierra Nevada Conservancy
J. Elias, American Land Conservancy
K. O'Toole, American Land Conservancy
M. Sayles, Lassen Land and Trails Trust